

## ABSTRACT

Methods and apparatus' for performing IPSec processing on an IP packet being transmitted onto a network and being received from a network are described. The methods and apparatus' further described perform IPSec processing inline which results in a reduced number of transfers over the system bus, reduced utilization of system memory, and a reduced utilization of the system CPU. An IP packet which requires IPSec processing enters an acceleration device. In one embodiment, the acceleration device is coupled to a security policy database (SPD) and security association database (SAD). IPSec processing is performed at the acceleration device without sending the IP Packet to system memory for processing.